

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 CCO-00 SS-15 SSO-00 ISO-00 NSC-05 INRE-00

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 058327

TOSEC 551

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOL, MASS, PK

SUBJECT: GOP REGRETS TIKKA KHAN INTERVIEW ON ARMS

1. PAKISTANI AMBASSADOR YAQUB CALLED ON ACTING ASSISTANT SECRETARY SOBER MARCH 14 TO CLARIFY OFFICIAL POSITION OF GOP ON ARMS QUESTION IN THE WAKE OF LEW SIMONS' INTERVIEW WITH TIKKA KHAN IN WASHINGTON POST MARCH 10. BECAUSE OF HIS OWN CONCERN OVER POTENTIAL FOR ADVERSE EFFECT HERE OF TIKKA COMMENTS, YAQUB SAID HE HAD SOUGHT CLARIFICATION FROM ISLAMABAD. ACTING ON INSTRUCTIONS HE HAD SUBSEQUENTLY RECEIVED FROM MINISTER OF STATE AZIZ AHMED, YAQUB REPORTED THAT TIKKA HIMSELF MAINTAINS THERE WAS SOME DISTORTION IN SIMONS' RENDITION OF HIS REMARKS. TIKKA SPECIFICALLY
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DENIES HE SAID ANYTHING ABOUT FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM ARAB

COUNTRIES.

2. YAQUB HAS BEEN TOLD TO EMPHASIZE BOTH TO THE DEPARTMENT AND KEY CONGRESSMEN THAT PAKISTANI POLICY REMAINS UNALTERED FROM THAT STATED BY PM BHUTTO IN WASHINGTON IN HIS TALKS WITH THE ADMINISTRATION AND ON THE HILL, I.E., THAT THE GOP SEEKS DEFENSIVE WEAPONS SUCH AS ANTI-TANK

AND ANTI-AIRCRAFT MISSILRY. YAQUB REMARKED THAT GOVERNMENT POLICY IS ENUNCIATED BY GOVERNMENTS AND FOREIGN MINISTRIES, NOT BY CHIEFS OF STAFF.

3. YAQUB WENT ON TO SAY HE WAS RECOMMENDING TO ISLAMABAD THAT PAKISTAN ARMED SERVICES NOT BE PERMITTED TO DEAL DIRECTLY WITH ARMS MANUFACTURERS WITHOUT SEEKING HIS (YAQUB'S) GUIDANCE AND FILTERING MESSAGES THROUGH HIM. YAQUB SAID HE HAD HEARD TALK OF "SOME TEAMS COMING HERE" (APPARENTLY A REFERENCE TO LTV'S INVITATION FOR TOUR OF A-7 FACILITIES BY PAF OFFICER TEAM). YAQUB SAID HE KNEW NOTHING OF THIS. HE HAD NO LIST OF EQUIPMENT WHICH THE GOP WISHED TO BUY HERE, AND WHEN HE GOT ONE HE ASSURED US HE WOULD COME DIRECTLY TO THE DEPARTMENT TO DISCUSS IT WITH US.

4. SOBER SAID HE FULLY AGREED WITH YAQUB'S INTEREST IN KEEPING THESE DISCUSSIONS IN OFFICIAL CHANNELS. HE SUGGESTED THAT UNTIL WE HAVE REQUESTS FOR EQUIPMENT FROM THE GOP WE TAKE THE STANCE THAT THERE IS NO BASIS FOR CONTACTS BETWEEN U.S. FIRMS AND PAKISTANI MILITARY. YAQUB EMPHATICALLY AGREED. SOBER NOTED IN THIS REGARD THAT ACTIVITIES OF LTV SALESMEN HAD COME TO HIS ATTENTION AND THAT WE HAD ALREADY TAKEN THIS POSITION WITH THEM. INGERSOLL

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